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Naval Postgraduate School Historical Highlights: La Novia Room diorama by Jo Mora

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La Novia Room' diorama by Jo Mora



The La Novia Room was originally called the Copper Cup Room and was renamed La Novia some time after 1940, when the diorama by Jo Mora (1876-1947) was unveiled.

La Novia is a half-lifesized sculpture of a Californio groom departing with his bride from their wedding ceremony ("La Novia" means "The Bride"). The figures were first molded in clay, then cast in artificial stone and painted. Much of the work was done in the Copper Cup Room, and the completed diorama was cantilevered into a hole cut through the wall.

Mora wrote that, "The trappings and costumes are of the Spanish period of California history. They are correct in every minute detail. Most of the guests arrived at a wedding ceremony on horseback, and the bride and groom invariably left for their new home mounted as shown in this group. The other two figures are friends, riding away from the





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wedding feast with them to see them on their way.” The walnut case also includes the escutcheon of the Count of Monterey, for whom the Spanish explorer Vizcaino claimed this area and named the bay in 1602.

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John Sanders

